



Alabama Geologist

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ADEM Guidance Requested

By: Mary Moran

Mr. James Warr, Director of the Alabama Department of Environmental Management (ADEM), in a letter dated February 19, 1998, requested guidance from the Alabama Board of Licensure for Professional Geologists (ABLPG) and the Alabama Board of Registration for Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors (PELSB) concerning a delineation between the practices of engineering and geology for various firms submitting documents to the Department for review. The ABLPG subsequently prepared a draft table of tasks and responsibilities for initial consideration.

The two boards met together on April 13, 1998 at the ABLPG's offices in Montgomery to discuss Mr. Warr's request. As a result of that meeting, an *ad hoc* P.G./P.E. Task Force, co-headed by Ms. Mary Moran, P.G., of the geologists' board and Mr. Lynn Doyle, P.E., of the engineers' board, was established. The members of the P.G./P.E. Task Force were selected from the Consulting Engineers Council of Alabama (Mr. Frazier Christy, P.E.), the Alabama Society of Professional Engineers (Mr. Wade Pitchford, P.E.), the Alabama Society of Civil Engineers (Dr. Joe Judkins, P.E.), the American Institute of Professional Geologists (Mr. Mark Tanner, P.G.), the Alabama Geological Society (Mr. R. Benjamin Noble, P.G.), and the Geological Survey of Alabama (Mr. Ed Osborne, P.G.), among other affiliations.

The P.G./P.E. Task Force met together at Ms. Moran's offices in

Birmingham on May 11, 1998 to discuss: the list of representative submittals or tasks attached to Mr. Warr's letter to the boards; the ABLPG's preliminary proposed table of tasks and responsibilities; the *Memorandum of Understanding Between the Alabama Board of Licensure for Professional Geologists and the Alabama Board of Registration for Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors*; and each board's *Rules and Regulations* and *Code of Ethics*. The task force determined that geologists' and engineers' responsibilities and areas of practice were adequately covered in the existing documents which establish the criteria which an individual must meet before he/she is registered/licensed to practice in Alabama, and that a specific listing at this time would be inappropriate. Simply put, registrants/licenseses are not supposed to practice outside of the areas of their expertise, and they are held to this by the *Code of Ethics* which they accepted with registration/licensure.

One suggestion that the task force had with respect to providing assistance to the Department would be for ADEM to require that a one-page "Supplemental Information Form" be completed for Department submittals. There is a precedent in the use of the "State of Alabama Building Permit Supplemental Information Form" which is submitted by architects and engineers. This form would make reference to Mr. Warr's Department list of February 19, 1998, in that the person making the submittal would have to indicate the project(s) or task(s) pro-

vided in the submittal, along with the overall project description; this would be in a "Part 1." "Part 2" of the form would consist of the declaration of the competence on the part of the person making the submittal. The Department would then keep this form in the file, and if questions arose during or subsequent to Department review as to the competency of the work, and these questions could not be satisfactorily resolved by the provider, the Department could forward a copy of the form to the appropriate board for investigation.

The P.G./P.E. Task Force has provided this suggestion and a draft "Supplemental Information Form" to the two boards for their consideration. If the boards approve, then a joint recommendation will be made to Mr. Warr. Additional information on this subject will be provided in future Alabama Geologist issues.

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ASBOG Testing Program

The ABLPG is a member of the National Association of State Boards of Geologists (ASBOG) and participates in the ASBOG testing program. Alabama Board Chair T.L. Neathery is Chair of the ASBOG Examination Committee for 1998. The Examination Committee oversees the Council of Examiners and provides recommendations to the ASBOG Executive Committee on matters relative to the national examination procedures. The National Tests are given twice a year, in April and September. All geologists applying for licensure or registration are normally required to pass the two-part examination prior to licensure.

April 1998 Test Results

The ABLPG administered the April 1998 ASBOG examination for professional geologists on April 17th. Nationally, 194 geologists took the "Fundamentals of Geology" Part of the examination and 153 took the "Practice of Geology Part". Here in Alabama, 6 persons took the Fundamentals part and 4 people took the Practice part. On May 15-16, the Council of Examiners meet in Biloxi, MS, to review the examination questions and responses and make any adjustments to the examination before the final grades were posted. After the final review and grading, 115 people (or 59.2%) passed the Fundamentals part and 103 (or 66.8%) passed the Practice part. In Alabama, 3 applicants (50%) passed the Fundamentals part and 3 applicants (75%) passed the Practice part. The passing grade for both examinations is 70. Statistics for the April examination are available from the Board Office. All Alabama applicants who took the examination have been provided with copies of the national statistics for their information.

Spring 1999 Examination

The 1999 Fundamentals and Practice examinations are scheduled for March 19, 1999. Persons who anticipate taking these examinations are urged to contact the Board Office as soon as possible to make application. The cut-off date for examination reservations is February 15th. Fees for taking either examination are \$150 each. Fees are assessed by ASBOG to cover the cost of test preparation, grading and review. Fees are made payable to the Alabama Board of Licensure for

Professional Geologists.

Rule Changes at State Agencies

By: Fred Mason

Changes in rules and regulations happen regularly at state agencies. Anytime rules are proposed and approved, the public is notified by public announcement in the major newspapers throughout the state. In many cases, public hearings and meetings are held and comments are received and reviewed by the agency's staff. This is the time that professional geologists should ensure that the requirements of the Professional Geologist Licensing Act and associated Rules and Regulations are properly referenced in the agency's regulations. If a rule requiring that a professional geologist prepare and certify a geological report is included in an Agency's regulations, it must be upheld by that agency's staff. Otherwise, it is the responsibility of the Alabama Board of Licensure for Professional Geologists to be the enforcement agency for all reports submitted to agencies. This is a difficult if not impossible task for a small board.

The Board requests your help in monitoring rule and regulation changes at state agencies. Your assistance is also needed to write letters and call agency officials to ensure requirements for a professional geologist are included. You should subscribe to agency newsletters and regularly call to find out what is happening in this area. When in doubt about a program, contact the Board Office.

Some agencies, programs, and officials are listed below:

- ADEM Public Water Supply Branch is writing regulations for Source Water Protection. Contact Joe Power, Charles Davis, or Jim Arnold for information at (334) 271-7700, P.O. Box 301463, Montgomery, AL 36130-1463.
- ADEM Hazardous and Solid Waste regulations are reviewed annually. Contact Gerald Hardy and Russell Kelly, respectively, for these programs - (334) 271-7700.
- ADEM UST regulations are being revised. Contact Dorothy Malaier - (334) 271-7700.
- ADEM UIC program contacts are Scott Hughes and Curt Johnson - (334) 271-7700.
- Alabama Surface Mining Commission contact is Randy Johnson, P.O. Box 2390, Jasper, AL 35502-2390, (205) 221-4130.
- The Alabama Oil and Gas Board contact is Dr. Donald Oltz, P.O. Drawer O, Tuscaloosa, AL 35486, (205)

349-2852.

- The Alabama Department of Public Health is working on rewriting on-site sewage regulations. Contact Pres Allender or Jimmy Coles at P.O. Box 303017, Montgomery, AL 36130-3017, (334) 206-5300.

If you work on any of these programs for your business and livelihood, you should make a regular effort to keep informed as to regulation and program status. Cultivate contacts and become involved.

Three Major Victories

1. **From Atlanta:** ASTM Committee D18.01.09 has by unanimous vote withdrawn from all further consideration the proposed standard on how to write a geotechnical engineering report (and perform geotechnical engineering).
2. **From California:** As you've probably heard, Prop.224 was killed in a lopsided 62% v. 38% vote. The private practice of engineering, architecture, and land surveying appears to be safe in California. It is doubtful that similar attempts will be mounted elsewhere.
3. **From Washington, DC:** ASTM representatives have agreed to promote acceptance of a caveat for standard guides and procedures that would significantly reduce the potential for misuse of those documents with respect to professional practice. Caveats would be mandatory or automatic and would go into all new and existing standards.

Web Page

The ABLPG will soon have its own web page. The page will ultimately contain downloadable forms such as: personal and professional reference forms; transcript request forms; the experience data sheet; and the continuing education reporting form. Recent issues of the Alabama Geologist will also appear, as will a copy of the "Alabama Professional Geologist Licensing Act." In addition, from time to time notices of special events, policy statements, reminders of continuing education opportunities, and ASBOG testing dates will be posted. The addresses, telephone numbers, and terms of current board members will also appear. Links to other boards and related sites will be included. The site is being constructed by Ms. April Barnes of Auburn University, and should be operative by the date of this newsletter.

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Continuing Education

By: Bob Cook

Continuing Education opportunities are many and varied. The following is a very brief list of activities for which Professional Development Hours (PDH) credits can be earned. Additional information is available directly from the societies through their headquarters or web sites. Greatly expanded lists of potential continuing education opportunities are published in Mining Engineering, GSA Today, Geotimes, The Professional Geologist, SEG Newsletter, AAPG Explorer, and the like. In addition, we are informed that it is the intention of the Alabama Geological Society to make available an assortment of continuing education activities aimed toward the satisfaction of this registration requirement. Several of these opportunities are listed below.

August 16-19, 1998 – GW & PCA's 1998 Annual Conference; Cobb Galleria Center, Atlanta, GA

August 22, 1998 – Alabama Geological Society Symposium on Geology and Geological Mapping; Importance to Economic Development in Alabama; Tuscaloosa, Alabama

October 3-8, 1998 – AIPG Annual National Meeting; Baton Rouge, LA

October 16-17, 1998 – The Alabama Geological Society Annual Field Trip; Cretaceous of the Selma-Demopolis area.

October 21-23, 1998 – GCAGS Annual Meeting; Corpus Christi, Texas

October 26-29, 1998 – GSA Annual National Meeting; Toronto, Canada

December 13-16, 1998 – NGWA 50th National Convention and Exposition, Las Vegas

March 24-26, 1999 – Geological Society of America SE Sectional Meeting; Athens, GA

April 11-14, 1999 – AAPG Annual Meeting; San Antonio, Texas

Mississippi Application Packages for Geological Registration Available on the Internet

The Mississippi State Board of Registered Professional Geologists announces that registration application packages are available at the following

website address — <http://geology.deq.state.ms.us/geologyreg>

The application package contains all of the necessary forms and required reading which includes the Rules of the Board and the codified law for application as a Registered Professional Geologist (RPG) or Geologist-In-Training (GIT). Application packages will also be available at all regular meetings of the Mississippi Geological Society. Should you not be able to attend these meetings or do not have access to the Internet, the application packages may also be obtained by requesting the package from the Board at P.O. Box 22742, Jackson, MS 39225-2742, or by calling 601/961-5507 and leaving your name, address, and phone number. However, please note that the preferred option is to download the information from the website.

The "grandfather period" for applying for registration as a RPG or GIT terminates in December, 1998. The general terms for qualifying under the grandfathering provision are a minimum of a degree in geology with 30 semester hours or 45 quarter hours in geological course work, and 4 years of documented geological experience. All of those whose practice may affect the public's health, safety, or welfare as defined by 73-63-1 *et seq.*, Mississippi Code 1972, as Annotated, which is the "Registered Professional Geologists Practice Act of 1997," must be registered with the Board in order to practice in Mississippi. The Board is currently discussing comity agreements with other states, which will be of beneficial use for those who become registrants in Mississippi, (i.e. Mississippi registrants will not be required to be registered in a state for which comity has been established). These comity discussions are in their early stages but have been favorably received by the states which have thus far been contacted. Those who have the degree requirements but lack the experience qualification may enroll as a Geologist-In-Training.

Please note that if you are a geologist from a state other than Mississippi and will be performing geologic work which may affect the public as defined by the law, you must be registered or have an application pending with the Board. The law was effective as of July 1, 1997. Additional information may be found at the previously noted website or by calling 601/961-5507.

Executive Secretary Notes

I hope everyone has received their Continuing Education Guidelines booklets and decals that were recently mailed from our office. Dr. Cook did an excellent job developing these guidelines to help you meet your CE requirements for the next biennium. Hopefully, the decals will allow you to show the citizens of Alabama that you are a licensed Professional Geologist.

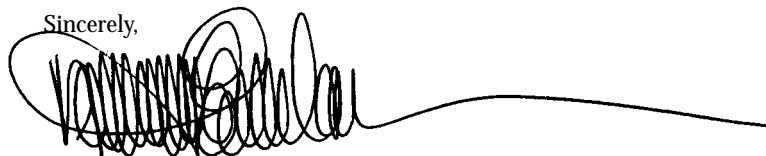
Please remember that your CE requirement does not begin until after your first renewal. We sent this guideline booklet to help you choose and meet your CE requirements for that renewal. You are not required to submit the reporting form with your first renewal. However, you can carry over 15 hours from each biennium. You will show your PDH's on the reporting form received with your renewal, but you will not be required to submit documentation. We will be doing random audits to ensure you are completing this requirement of licensure is being met.

The Board made some minor rule changes this last quarter. There were some grammatical corrections made and a major change regarding licensure renewals. Licenses will now expire two years after the effective date. This will allow the Board to renew licenses monthly instead of only in July. This will ensure a more timely response from the Board Office, to process renewals as quickly as possible.

The Board Office is now located in Suite 301 in the same building as before. The office space is now more than adequate for the activities required. The Board now has its own Conference Room, located in Suite 394. We will begin to have quarterly meetings with dates established in advance and hopefully we will be notifying you of these dates in the *Alabama Geologist*.

Please do not hesitate to contact me or any member of the staff if we can ever be of any assistance to you. We are always interested in your comments and look forward to continue working with you in the future.

Sincerely,



Keith E. Warren
Executive Secretary

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Alabama Geologist

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